

An Evaluation of Michigan Education Corps Reading Corps

ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT



2023-2024



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The Center’s portfolio includes projects to evaluate the impact of AmeriCorps programming, projects to advance the existing knowledge base in education, and development projects to bring new and innovative programming to communities across the nation.

<https://nssc.serveminnesota.org/>



Since 1963, Hope Network has been committed to supporting underserved individuals such as those with mental illness, neurological injuries, and developmental disabilities with a recent focus on children through services including literacy intervention, trauma-informed care, and residential treatment. Hope Network serves 240 plus communities, with 2,800 staff members, and more than 23,000 people annually throughout Michigan.

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Executive Summary

Reading Corps is an AmeriCorps program that provides schools with trained literacy Interventionists (also called members or tutors) to support reading development for students in Kindergarten through grade 3. Reading Corps tutors are trained to implement evidence-based literacy instruction and assessment protocols. Tutors are supported by a multi-level coaching model that includes site-based and external coaches. Full-time tutors serve 15-18 students for 20 minutes each day. The research-based tutoring interventions are supplemental to the core reading instruction provided at each school. The goal of the tutoring is to raise individual students' literacy levels so that they are on track to meet or exceed the next program-specified literacy benchmark.

The Reading Corps evaluation addresses several broad questions with data collected during the 2023-24 school year.

1. What is the scope of the MEC Reading Corps program?

127 Reading Corps tutors served a total of 2,264 students across 70 schools. Black or African American and White were the largest racial/ethnic categories for participating students.

2. To what extent was the Reading Corps program implemented as intended?

MEC coaches observed tutors administering assessments and delivering interventions throughout the school year. These observations allow for coaches to build on the tutor's formal training and to help tutors improve their implementation of the Reading Corps model. The results of the observations show that assessments and interventions were conducted with high levels of mean fidelity (>95% accuracy) and in accordance with their established evidence base.

On average, students received 67 minutes of tutoring per week across 19 weeks. Tutor and student absences were the most common reasons for missed tutoring sessions.

3. To what extent did participating students improve their literacy skills?

Weekly progress monitoring assessments for participating students demonstrated that 68% of students had a weekly growth rate exceeding the target growth, which means these students were closing their individual achievement gap and catching up to their grade level targets. Across four of the five grades and measures, a similar percentage of white students exceeded target growth compared to non-white students. On the fifth measure – Grade 1 CBMR – white students exceeded target growth at a higher rate than nonwhite students.

When asked in a survey about the impact of the program on students, nearly all tutor, Internal Coach, Administrator, and Teacher respondents indicated participation in MEC Reading Corps had a positive impact on students.

4. How did serving as an MEC Tutor impact their skills and knowledge related to education and their future career goals?

Of tutor respondents to an end-of-year survey 96% indicated Reading Corps had a positive impact on them personally. Nearly all respondents also said their service increased their knowledge and skills related to education. Additionally, 58% of respondents answered that they are likely or very likely to pursue a career in education as a result of their MEC service. These results indicate MEC Reading Corps service likely makes a noteworthy contribution to the education career pipeline in the communities where tutors serve.

5. MEC will work with participating schools to include aggregate program data in the school improvement planning process and applicable data sets.

Of those Administrators who responded, 46% indicated that MEC Reading Corps was in their MICIP plan, 8% did not know, 41% indicated MEC Reading Corps was not in their MICIP plan, and 5% indicate not applicable. MEC will continue to revise, and re-visit guidance with participating schools to support MEC Reading Corps documentation in partner schools' MICIP plans and processes to ensure MEC is intentionally alignment with a districts and schools MTSS framework.

6. MEC will work with participating schools to include MEC program data in the school's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) implementation and monitoring data sets; and,

7. MEC program staff will work with school districts, intermediate school districts, and MDE staff to refine the role of the MEC program within overall MTSS processes.

End-of-year survey results indicate the following:

Question 1: My site uses MEC Reading Corps data to inform and monitor our multi-tier system of supports (MTSS) implementation for literacy.

Of Administrators who responded, 90% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 85% indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 5% indicated no opinion. Of Internal Coaches who responded, 84% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 9% indicated no opinion, and 7% indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed, Of Teachers who responded, 82% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 11% indicated no opinion, and 7% indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed,

Question 2: MEC Reading Corps is integrated into our MTSS at my site.

Of Administrators, who responded, 84% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 11% disagreed, and 5% indicated no opinion. Of Internal Coaches who responded, 87% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 9% disagreed, and 4% indicated no opinion. Of Teachers who responded, 84% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 9% disagreed, and 7% indicated no opinion.

There are numerous touchpoints both in-person, virtual, and through other communications that MEC uses throughout the program year to build relationships with stakeholders and partners.

MEC will provide a statement of work, which includes a timeline of the project, and budget summary, and a budget detail for progress monitoring and continuous improvement of program implementation.

This information was provided to Kellie Flaminio, Department Analyst/Early Literacy Grant Coordinator, Office of Educational Supports, on September 8, 2023

MEC will provide trainings for newly identified schools as the programs expand.

Please see Appendix D for MEC Reading Corps Trainings for all participating schools

Introduction

Reading Corps Overview

Reading Corps is an AmeriCorps program that provides schools with trained literacy tutors to support reading development for students in Kindergarten through grade 3. MEC Reading Corps Tutors are trained to implement evidence-based literacy instruction and assessment protocols.

The Reading Corps model aligns with Response-to-Intervention (RTI) or Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS), which are two descriptions of a framework for delivering educational services effectively and efficiently.¹ Key aspects of that alignment include the following:

- Clear literacy targets at each grade level
- Benchmark assessment three times a year to identify students eligible for individualized interventions
- Evidence-based interventions²
- Frequent progress monitoring during intervention delivery
- High-quality training in program procedures, coaching, and observations to support fidelity of implementation

In an MTSS framework, data play the key roles of screening student eligibility for additional services and monitoring student progress towards achieving academic goals (i.e., grade level benchmarks). Reading Corps screens students for program eligibility three times a year (i.e., fall, winter, spring) using empirically-derived grade- and

content-specific performance benchmarks. Eligible students - defined as students scoring below target scores - are determined potential candidates to receive supplemental Reading Corps support. Final decisions are made with Internal Coaches at each school site.

Reading Corps is focused on intervention in the “Big Five Ideas in Literacy” as identified by the National Reading Panel, including phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.³ Reading Corps is particularly strong at developing word recognition within the Science of Reading.⁴ Tutoring interventions promote development of these skills, and are supplemental to the core reading instruction provided at each school. The goal of tutoring is to raise individual students’ literacy levels so that they are on track to meet or exceed the next program-specified grade level literacy benchmark.



¹ Burns et al., 2016

² See ESSA, What Works Clearinghouse, & www.ProvenTutoring.com

³ Snow et al., 1998

⁴ See [Science of Reading and Reading Corps white paper](#).

Overview of the Evaluation

The MEC Reading Corps evaluation report is organized around questions using data that are collected throughout the school year. MEC Program Staff collect data about tutors and schools, including survey responses. MEC Tutors collect data about student dosage and literacy outcomes. Coaches collect details about tutor implementation of interventions and assessments. These data are used to answer the following:

1. What is the scope of the MEC Reading Corps program?
2. To what extent was MEC Reading Corps implemented as intended?
3. To what extent did participating students improve their literacy skills?
4. How did serving as an MEC Interventionist impact their skills and knowledge related to education and their future career goals?
5. MEC will work with participating schools to include MEC program data in the school's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) implementation and monitoring data sets.
6. MEC program staff will work with school districts, intermediate school districts, and MDE staff to refine the role of the MEC program within overall MTSS processes.
7. MEC will provide a statement of work, which includes a timeline of the project, a budget summary, and a budget detail for progress monitoring and continuous improvement of program implementation.
8. MEC will provide trainings for newly identified schools as the programs expand.

1. What is the scope of the MEC Reading Corps program?

Schools and Tutors

MEC partners with elementary schools and districts to implement the Reading Corps program. MEC Program Staff and participating elementary schools recruit community members to serve as MEC Reading Corps Interventionists (also called Tutors or Members) through AmeriCorps. Interventionists commit to serving a set number of hours per week, e.g., full-time AmeriCorps members commit to complete 1,200 hours of service. Members receive a living allowance, healthcare, and other benefits, and are provided coaching by school staff and an MEC Coaching Specialist throughout their service term. Upon completion of their service, members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that can be used to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training, repay qualified student loans, and pay other costs of post-secondary education.

Table 1 displays the number of participating schools, Coaching Specialists, and tutors that served during the 2023-24 program year.

Table 1. Schools, Coaches, and Tutors

Schools	Coaching Specialists	Tutors*
70	8	127

*Defined as having entered tutoring minutes for at least one student in the Reading Corps Data Management System.

Reading Corps tutors receive training through an online Learning Management System (LMS). The intensive, information-filled courses on the LMS provide foundational training in the research-based literacy interventions employed by Reading Corps. Throughout the courses, tutors learn the skills, knowledge, and tools needed to serve as literacy interventionists. Tutors are provided with detailed literacy manuals as well as online resources that mirror and supplement the contents of the manual (e.g., videos of model interventions and best practices). Both the manuals and online resources are intended to provide tutors with just-in-time support and opportunities for continued professional development and skill refinement. Additional training is provided throughout the term of service.

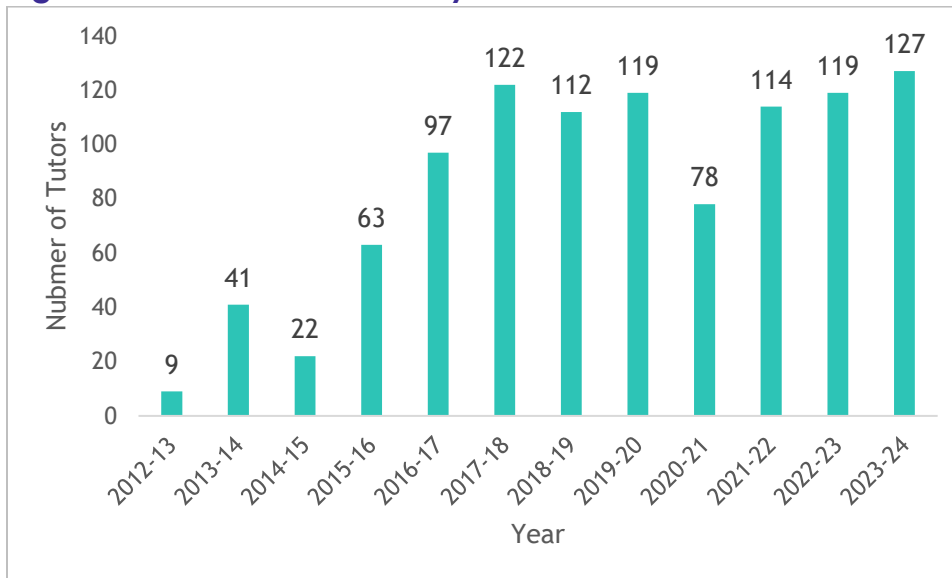
In addition to extensive training, MEC provides tutors with multiple layers of supervision to ensure integrity of program implementation. Schools identify a staff member to serve as an Internal Coach, who is typically a literacy specialist, teacher, or instructional coach to serve as immediate on-site supervisor, mentor, and advocate for tutors. The Internal Coach's role is to monitor tutors and provide guidance in the implementation of Reading Corps's assessments and interventions. As the front-line supervisor, the Internal Coach is a critical component of the supervisory structure.

MEC Coaching Specialists provide both tutors and Internal Coaches with expert

support on literacy instruction and ensure implementation integrity of Reading Corps program elements. In addition, MEC AmeriCorps Program staff help ensure a successful year of AmeriCorps service providing administrative oversight for program implementation to schools participating in Reading Corps. The number of tutors

serving varies by program year based on a number of factors including tutor recruitment, tutor types (i.e. full-time or part-time tutors), school interest, tutor retention, and available public and private funding. Figure 1 displays the number of tutors who served each year of the program.

Figure 1. Number of Tutors by Year

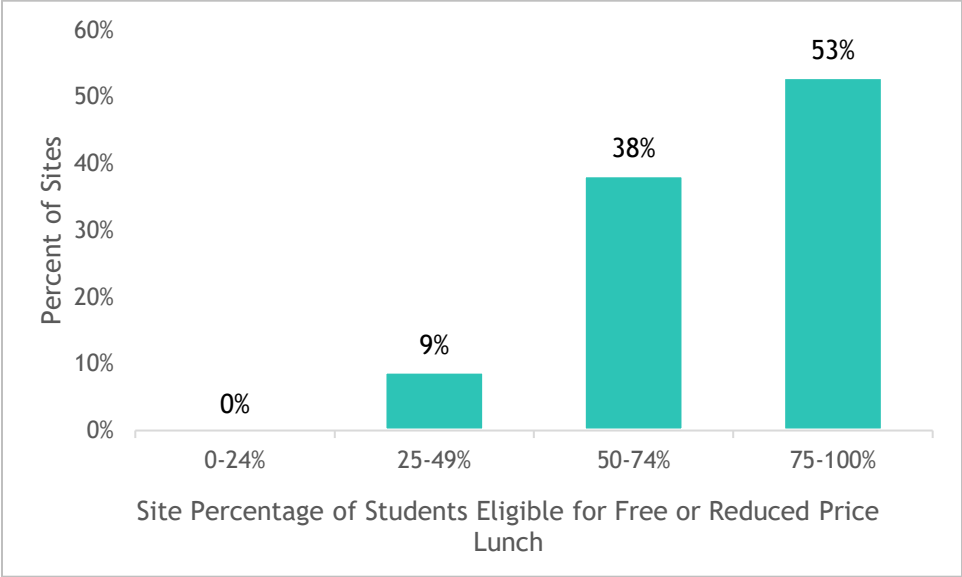


School Characteristics

Reading Corps strives to serve students and schools that would benefit the most from additional resources for which the percentage of students at the school who are eligible for the federal free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) program can be a useful indicator. Students from families with incomes at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of Reading Corps schools based on their school level FRPL percentage. The majority of students at 91% of participating schools are eligible for FRPL. Only 9% of participating schools have less than 25% of students eligible for FRPL, indicating most tutors were placed in schools where access to resources may be at least somewhat limited.

Figure 2. Distribution of Schools by Student Eligibility for Free or Reduced Price-Lunch Program



Note: Data not available for five schools.

Students Tutored

Students are identified as good candidates for Reading Corps participation through a two-step process. First, teachers or other school staff recommend students for Reading Corps based on student performance or previous service. Second, MEC Tutors administer brief benchmark assessments to recommended students. Students who score below benchmark targets that are linked to future academic success are eligible to receive Reading Corps tutoring (see Appendix A).

After identifying eligible students, the tutor and Internal Coach select which students will be served called the tutor's caseload. Coaches set the caseload using a number of factors such as the school's schedule and other services available to eligible students.

The number of students on a caseload depends on the tutor's service commitment. Full-time tutors serve 15 or

more students each day while part-time tutors serve 10 students.

Table 2 displays the number of students served by grade in all schools. Some schools choose to serve more students in certain grades, which results in an uneven distribution of students served across grades.

Table 2. Number of Students Tutored

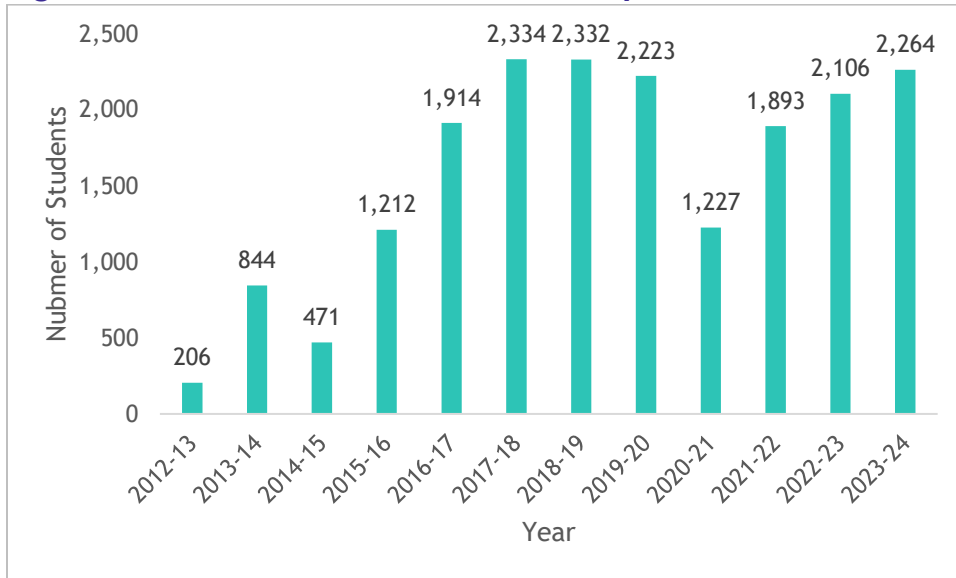
Grade	Number of Students
Kindergarten	289
First	660
Second	671
Third	644
Total	2,264

The number of students served varies by program year based on many factors including Tutor recruitment and retention, the types of Tutors serving (i.e. full-time or part-time), whether students are receiving one-on-one or paired

intervention, and the frequency of students exiting or graduating from the program. Figure 3 displays the number of students who were tutored each year of

the program. Note the number of students served in 2019-2022 were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

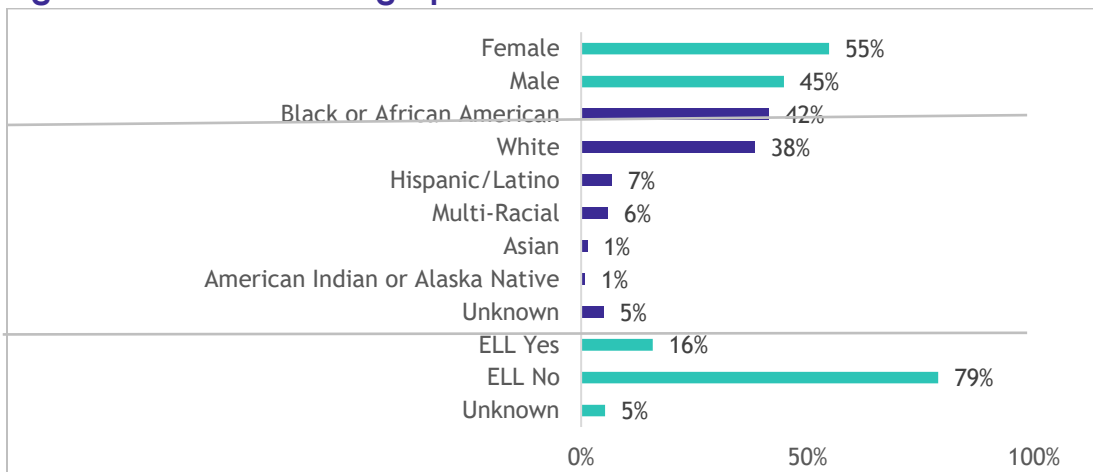
Figure 3. Number of Students Tutored by Year



MEC Reading Corps tutors record demographic information of students they tutor, which allows MEC to disaggregate student outputs and outcomes by important demographics to ensure the program is having an equitable impact. The information is also used in various reports to describe the

students participating in the program. Figure 4 shows Black or African American students and white students were the largest racial/ethnic groups participating in the program, and 16% of students served were identified as English Learners

Figure 4. Student Demographics



2. To what extent was the Reading Corps program implemented as intended?

Coaching Observations

Ensuring accurate, effective implementation is a core principle of Reading Corps. Both Internal Coaches and Coaching Specialists provide tutors with expert support on literacy instruction and ensure implementation integrity of Reading Corps program elements through ongoing monitoring and observation.

During coaching sessions, MEC Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches discuss student selection for service, track student progress for databased decisions, and observe tutors administering assessments and delivering interventions. The observations allow coaches to build on a tutor's formal training and to help tutors improve their implementation of the Reading Corps model.

Internal Coaches are expected to observe tutors administering each assessment throughout the year to ensure seasonal benchmark data are

collected accurately. These observations usually occur before each seasonal benchmark window. Coaches also observe tutors delivering interventions *at least* once per month to ensure fidelity to each intervention's effective instructional processes. Table 3 displays the percent of Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches who observed tutors administering assessments and delivering interventions at least one time during the school year. The table also shows the percentage of coaches who met the program's expectation for observations throughout the school year. Coaching Specialists observed all tutors administering assessments at least once and provided intervention observations throughout the year to most tutors. Internal Coaches provided less frequent observations, suggesting there were barriers preventing Internal Coaches from providing ongoing coaching support to the Tutors and program model.

Table 3. Assessment and Intervention Coaching Observations by Coach Role

Observation Type	Coaching Specialist		Internal Coach	
	Percent of Tutors Observed at Least Once	Percent of Tutors Observed in Accordance with Expectations*	Percent of Tutors Observed at Least Once	Percent of Tutors Observed in Accordance with Expectations*
Assessment	95%	84%		
Intervention	93%	84%	77%	60%

*Note: Table includes tutors that served for a minimum of two months.
Coaching Specialists are expected to conduct assessment observations before each benchmark window and both coaches should conduct intervention observations at least once each month.

Tutor Fidelity

During coaching sessions, coaches complete a fidelity checklist for each assessment or intervention they observe. Each checklist lists the important steps for accurate completion such as starting the timer immediately when child says the first word or letter during an assessment or the tutor using appropriate pacing during a reading fluency intervention. After completing each assessment or intervention fidelity observation, coaches enter the number of checklist items that the tutor delivered correctly into the online Reading Corps Data Management System (RCDMS). The percent fidelity is then calculated by dividing the number of items delivered correctly by the total number of items.

If tutors do not properly administer an assessment, coaches will provide targeted training and observe the tutor delivering the assessment again. Ongoing observation and coaching continue until the tutor achieves at least 90% accuracy. This process helps to ensure assessment data are properly

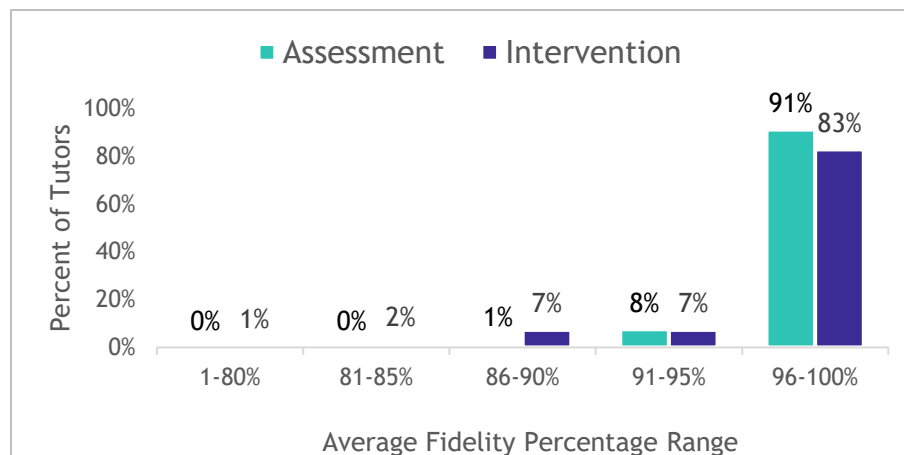
collected and that the results accurately measure each student's literacy skills. Table 4 displays the total number of fidelity checks completed and the average fidelity from assessment and intervention observations.

Table 4. Assessment and Intervention Fidelity

Fidelity Type	Total Checks Collected	Average Fidelity
Assessment	2,438	98.8%
Intervention	1,980	97.6%
Total	4,418	98.3%

For each tutor, all observations are combined to calculate their overall assessment and intervention fidelity. A tutor's average fidelity can vary throughout the year, with lower scores being more common at the beginning of the year. Figure 5 shows the distribution of tutors by their average fidelity. Fidelity tends to be very high for nearly all tutors suggesting training and coaching helps tutors implement key components of the program accurately.

Figure 5. Distribution of Tutors by Assessment and Intervention Fidelity Range



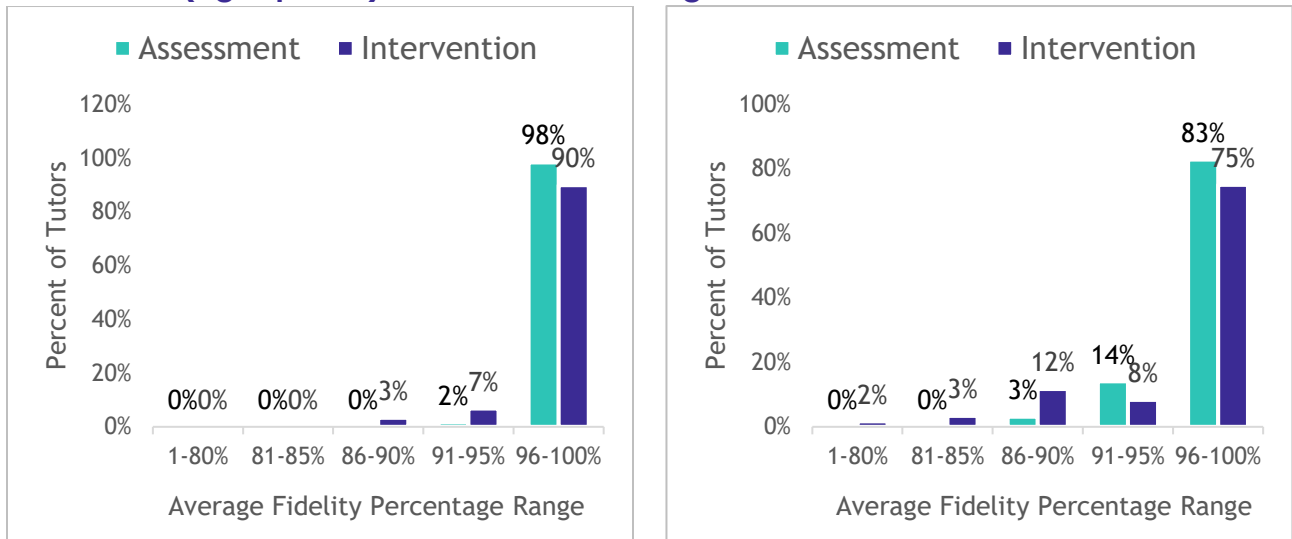
Figures 6 also shows the distribution of tutors by their assessment and

intervention average fidelity, but the data are disaggregated between tutors

at schools where fewer than 75% of students are eligible for the FRPL program and tutors at schools with 75% or more students eligible. For both assessment and intervention implementation, fidelity data are lower

at schools with a higher percentage of students eligible for the FRPL program, indicating tutors at these schools may need greater support delivering tutoring interventions in this context.

Figure 6. Distribution of Tutor Fidelity at Schools with Less Than (left panel) or More Than (right panel) 75% of Students Eligible for FRPL



Tutor Caseloads

Tutors work with their coaches to determine which students they will serve based on student eligibility, teacher recommendations, other services offered at the school, and general school priorities for students to serve.

Table 5 shows the average number of students served per tutor based on their minimum caseload expectation. The last

column of the table shows the percentage of tutors who met or exceeded their caseload expectation for at least 80% of the weeks they served in the program. Over half of tutors were able to meet their caseload expectation 80% of the time. Tutors with a caseload expectation of 10 students were more likely to have a full caseload than tutors with an expectation of 15 students.

Table 5. Tutor Caseloads

Minimum Caseload Expectation	Number of Tutors	Average Total Students Served per Tutor	Percentage of Tutors Meeting Caseload Expectation
10 students	32	14.0	73%
15 students	92	19.7	63%

Student Dosage

Tutors work with students on their caseload every day for 20 minutes. Most

tutoring is completed one-to-one, but a subset of interventions can be delivered in groups of two students. Tutors record each student's daily minutes in the online RCDMS. Table 6 shows the total number of tutoring sessions and the average number of sessions, weeks, and minutes per week students received in each grade. The table also

disaggregates the data for white and non-white students. Students received a substantial number of tutoring sessions with over an hour of tutoring each week across multiple months. White students tended to receive both more tutoring sessions and more minutes of tutoring per week.

Table 6. Tutoring Dosage by Grade and Race

Student Race	Students Tutored	Total Tutoring Sessions	Average Tutoring Sessions per Student	Average Tutoring Weeks per Student	Average Tutoring Minutes per Week per Student
Grade K	289	13,023	45.1	14.0	64.9
White	93	5,070	54.5	16.1	70.4
Non-White	187	7,419	39.7	12.7	61.8
Grade 1	660	41,846	63.4	19.0	66.6
White	280	19,982	71.4	20.5	69.7
Non-White	345	19,833	57.5	17.8	64.1
Grade 2	671	45,383	67.6	20.0	67.6
White	264	21,200	80.3	23.1	69.6
Non-White	357	20,711	58.0	17.6	65.5
Grade 3	644	42,764	66.4	19.8	65.9
White	231	18,308	79.3	23.1	67.6
Non-White	394	23,715	60.2	18.2	64.7
Total	2,264	143,016	63.2	18.9	66.5
White	868	64,560	74.4	21.5	69.1
Non-White	1,283	71,678	55.9	17.1	64.4

Note: The subtotals do not equal the totals as they exclude students with an Unknown race/ethnicity in the program database.

In addition to recording the number of tutoring minutes, tutors also record the reason a scheduled tutoring session was not delivered. Tutors are able to indicate if a session was missed for each of the following reasons: student absence from school, tutor absence from school, tutor receiving training, tutor administering an assessment to the student instead of delivering an intervention, or other for any reason not provided.

Table 7 displays the percentage of days tutoring sessions were delivered along with the rate of each missed tutoring session reason. The table also disaggregates the data for white and non-white students. Student and tutor absences were the most common reasons for missed sessions. White students had a greater percentage of sessions delivered than non-white students, with tutor and student absences being the most substantial difference between the two groups.

Table 7. Tutoring Attendance by Grade and Race

Student Race	Session Attended	Tutor Absent	Student Absent	Assessing Student	Tutor Training	Other
Grade K	69%	11%	10%	1%	1%	8%
White	77%	8%	8%	1%	0%	6%
Non-White	66%	12%	11%	1%	1%	9%
Grade 1	71%	11%	9%	1%	1%	7%
White	77%	8%	7%	1%	1%	6%
Non-White	67%	12%	11%	1%	1%	8%
Grade 2	72%	11%	9%	1%	0%	7%
White	76%	10%	8%	1%	0%	6%
Non-White	69%	12%	11%	1%	1%	7%
Grade 3	71%	11%	9%	1%	1%	8%
White	75%	9%	7%	1%	0%	7%
Non-White	69%	11%	10%	1%	1%	8%
Total	71%	11%	9%	1%	1%	7%
White	76%	9%	7%	1%	0%	7%
Non-White	68%	12%	11%	1%	1%	8%

Table 8 displays the percentage of days tutoring sessions were delivered along with the rate of each missed tutoring session reason disaggregated by site level Free-Reduced Price Lunch rate. Students at schools with a greater percentage of students eligible for the FRPL program received a lower percentage of sessions compared to students at schools with fewer students eligible for the FRPL program.

Table 8. Tutoring Attendance by Grade and Site Free-Reduced Price Lunch

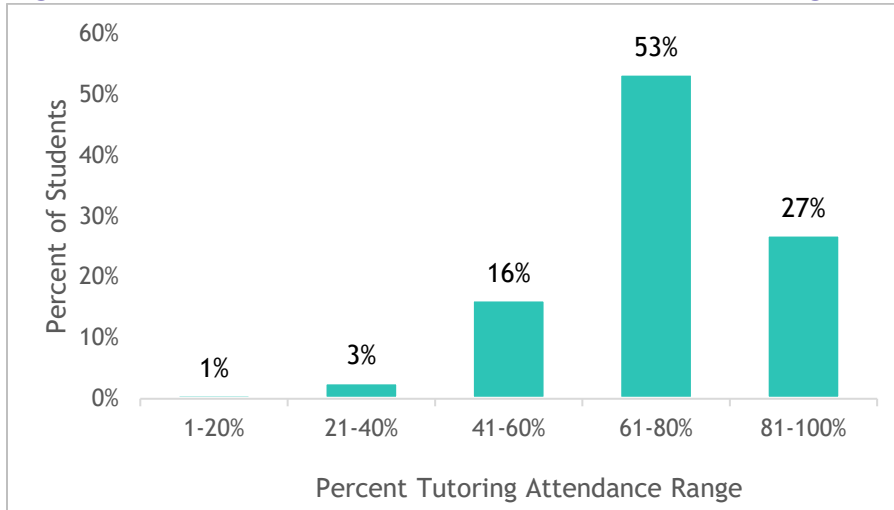
Site FRPL Percent	Session Attended	Tutor Absent	Student Absent	Assessing Student	Tutor Training	Other
25-49%	74%	10%	7%	1%	1%	7%
50-74%	76%	9%	7%	1%	1%	7%
75-100%	68%	11%	12%	1%	1%	8%
Total	72%	10%	9%	1%	1%	7%

MEC tracks tutoring attendance for each student throughout the school year using a 'percent tutoring' metric. A student's percent tutoring is equal to the number of tutoring sessions delivered divided by the number of days tutoring was scheduled to happen (i.e. the metric ignores days there is not school). The program also tracks a tutor's percent tutoring by combining all of

their individual student's percent tutoring into a tutor average. The program strives for each student and tutor to achieve at least 80% tutoring. Tutors falling below this target are provided extra support to improve the frequency of tutoring delivery wherever possible. Figure 7 displays the distribution of students by their percent tutoring range. The majority of students received

tutoring between 61-80% of their scheduled days, indicating a growth opportunity for the program.

Figure 7. Distribution of Students by Percent Tutoring Range



3. To what extent did participating students improve their literacy skills?

Measures of Elementary Literacy

Data for literacy outcomes are reported from student performance on measures of early literacy that are designed for students in Kindergarten through grade 3. The measures assess phonics skills (i.e., knowing sounds and simple word-level phonetic relationships) and reading fluency skills (i.e., automaticity and accuracy of reading connected text). The specific measures are listed below (see Appendix B for the research base):

- Test of Letter Sounds
- Test of Nonsense Words (English)
- CBMreading

The measures are administered by MEC tutors at each screening period or benchmark window - fall, winter, and

spring. Tutors assess students who previously received Reading Corps tutoring, and students identified by classroom teachers as potential candidates for tutoring. Benchmark scores are compared to seasonal grade level targets that predict future reading success. Students who score below target are considered good candidates for Reading Corps tutoring (see Appendix A).

The literacy assessments are also used to progress monitor students while they are receiving tutoring. Tutors progress monitor each student they are tutoring one time per week and track their progress toward the proficiency targets.

Students' weekly scores are used by coaches to determine if students have made enough progress to exit the program and no longer receive tutoring.

Student Performance during Tutoring

A student's weekly progress monitoring score allows the program to measure their growth while receiving tutoring. This growth can be compared to target growth, which is the amount of weekly growth a student who is on target in the fall would need to maintain throughout the year to remain on target in the spring. Students who are eligible for

Reading Corps need growth rates above target growth if they are going to meet future grade level targets. In other words, these students need to make more than a year's worth of growth if they are going to catch up and close their individual achievement gap.

Table 9 displays the number and percentage of students with above target growth for each grade and measure. Of students tutored, 68% were catching up to their grade level targets, with Kindergarten and Grade 3 having the highest percentage of students above target growth.

Table 9. Student Growth

	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 1*	Grade 2	Grade 3	Total***
	Letter Sounds	Nonsense Words (Eng.)	CBMReading			
Number of Students**	258	412	463	614	591	2,046
Number of Students Above Target Growth	195	277	201	358	440	1,383
Percentage of Students Above Target Growth	75.6%	67.2%	43.4%	58.3%	74.5%	67.6%

* Students in this group may have also participated in Grade 1 Test of Nonsense Words (Eng.).

** Students must have at least 6 progress monitoring data points to be included in the growth rate calculations.

*** Students counted in both the Grade 1 Test of Nonsense Words (Eng) and Grade 1 CBMreading columns are counted in the total number of students one time and in the number of students above target total if they exceeded the target on at least one of the two measures.

Figure 8 disaggregates the above student outcome data into non-white and white students in order to better understand program impact across key demographic considerations. Across four of the five grades and measures, a similar percentage of white students exceeded target growth compared to non-white students. Only Grade 1 CBMreading had a substantial difference with white students

exceeding target growth by 8 percentage points more than non-white students.

Figure 9 disaggregates student outcome data by the school level percentage of students eligible for the free-reduced price lunch program. For some grades, students at schools with the greatest percentage of students eligible for the FRPL program had a lower percentage

for exceeding target growth than students at schools with the fewest percentage of students eligible for the FRPL program. However, the opposite was true for some grades as well. Rigorous comparative research shows that students from various backgrounds make marked improvements during

Reading Corps tutoring, as compared to randomly identified peers who do not access the program.⁵ Figure 8 and Figure 9 highlight a need to ensure students across demographic backgrounds consistently benefit to the greatest possible extent.

Figure 8. Percentage of Students Above Target Growth By Race

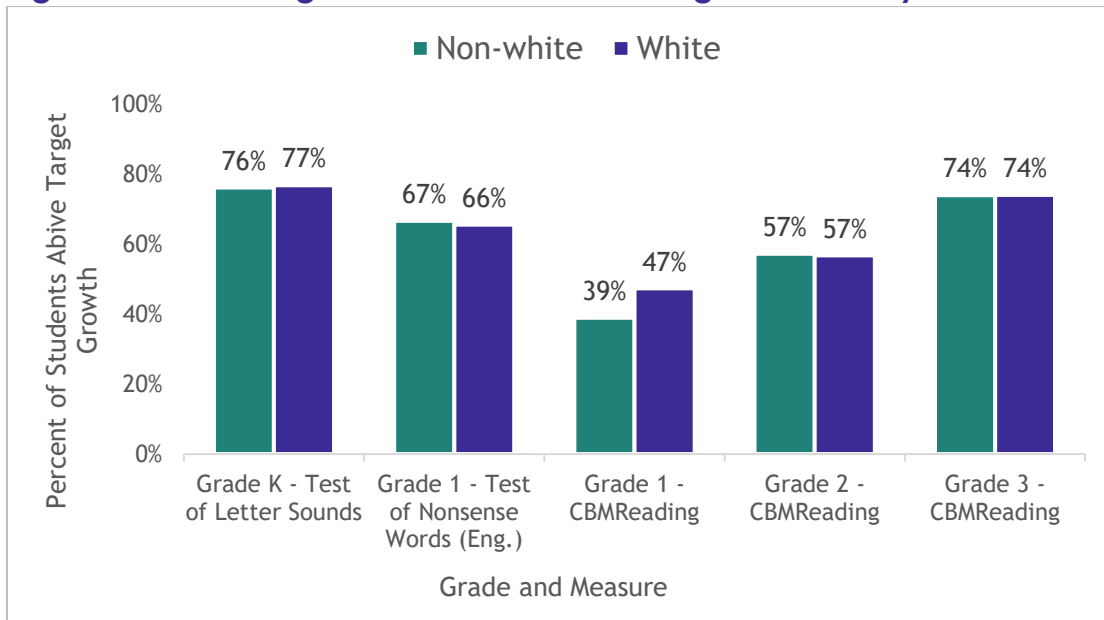
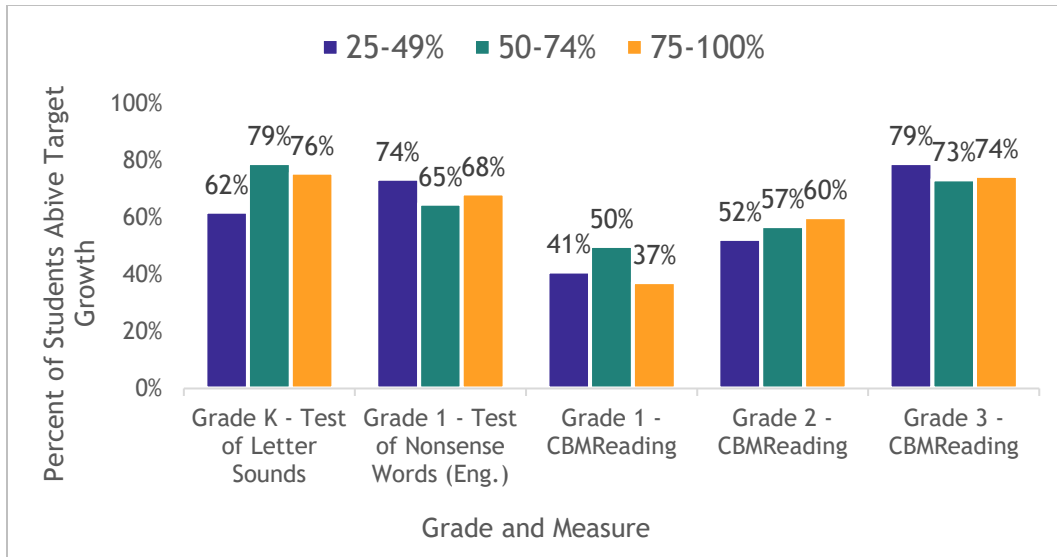


Figure 9. Percentage of Students Above Target Growth By School FRPL Percentage

⁵ Markovitz et al., 2014, 2018, 2018

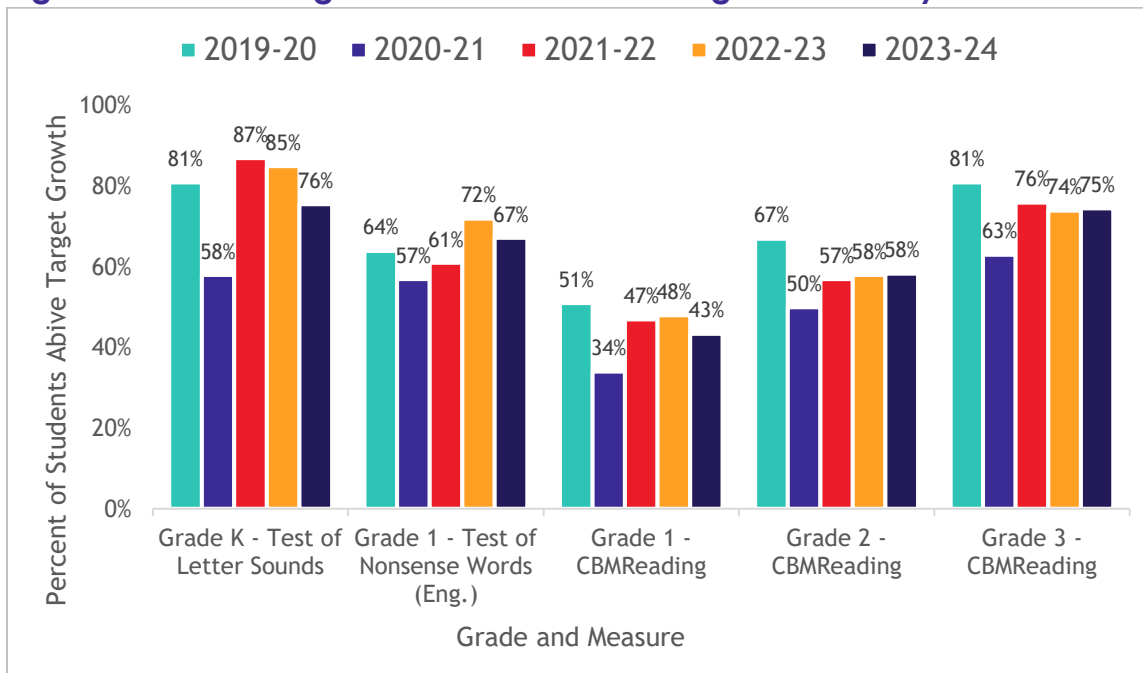


Note: Data not shown for grade/site FRPL combinations with sample sizes below 10 students.

Comparing the percentage of students exceeding target growth across program years is an effective way to track overall program effectiveness and identify potential needs for program improvement. Figure 10 displays the

percentage of students above target growth for the past five years. The percentage of students exceeding target growth in 2023-24 was greater than or equal to the previous year for two of the five grades and measures.

Figure 10. Percentage of Students Above Target Growth by Year



Notes: Use caution when comparing outcome data across years as the program was significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Procedures for scoring Test of Nonsense Words changed in 2022-23.

Student Performance after Tutoring

Students who consistently meet grade level targets during tutoring graduate or “exit” from the program, allowing another eligible student at the school to receive tutoring. MEC continues to assess exited students both weekly and at benchmark windows to track the maintenance of their skills and determine if students would benefit from resuming tutoring. Table 10 displays the percentage of students who exit

Reading Corps by meeting grade level targets who then later meet the spring benchmark near the end of the school year (see Appendix A for more information). In total, about 50% of students who exited the program also met the spring benchmark target score. Kindergarten had the highest percentage of students who exited and later met the spring benchmark.

Table 10. End-of-Year Performance of Exited Students

Grade	Number of Students	Number Exited*	Exited and Have a Spring Benchmark	Exited and Met Spring Benchmark	Percentage Exited and Met Spring Benchmark
Kindergarten	289	92	84	61	72.6%
Grade 1	660	137	130	68	52.3%
Grade 2	671	139	132	48	36.4%
Grade 3	644	159	149	71	47.7%
Total	2,264	527	495	248	50.1%

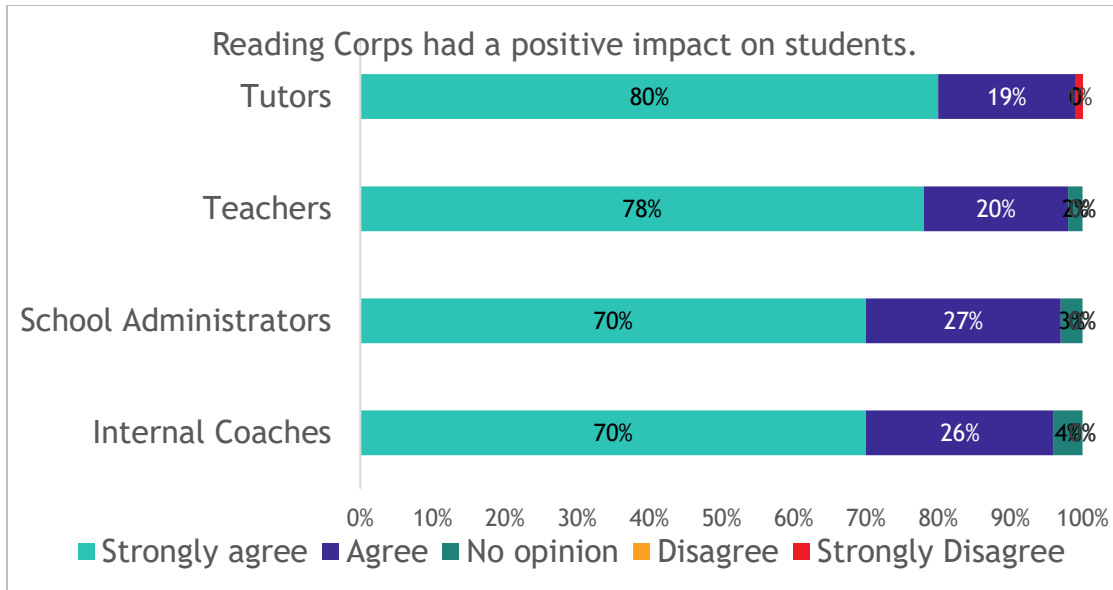
* “Exited” indicates student progress was at or above expected grade-level trajectories for skill improvement. Reading Corps defines at or above grade-level trajectory as having 3-5 consecutive weekly points above a target growth line plus 2 points above an upcoming seasonal benchmark target score.

Perceptions of Student Performance

In the spring of each program year, MEC distributes an online survey to Tutors, Internal Coaches, Administrators, and Classroom Teachers of students participating in Reading Corps. The survey asks a wide-range of questions regarding their experience with Reading

Corps and potential impact of the program. Figure 11 displays the percentage of respondents who agreed or disagreed that MEC Reading Corps had a positive impact on students. The survey results are notably positive with nearly all respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that Reading Corps had a positive impact on students.

Figure 11. Survey Results on Student Impact



Note: Coaches, administrators, and teachers were asked to agree or disagree with the statement "Participation in Reading Corps had a positive impact on students" while tutors were asked "My service had a positive impact on students."

4. How did serving as a tutor impact their skills and knowledge related to education and their future career goals?

While supporting student literacy growth is the primary goal for the program, MEC also strives to provide tutors with an overall positive experience and prepare them for any future career they might pursue, especially careers in the education field. Annual survey results (discussed previously) are used to evaluate the program's impact on the tutors themselves.

Service Experience

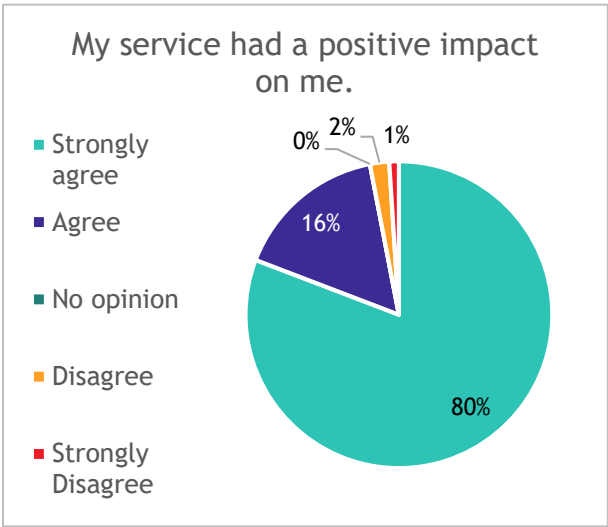
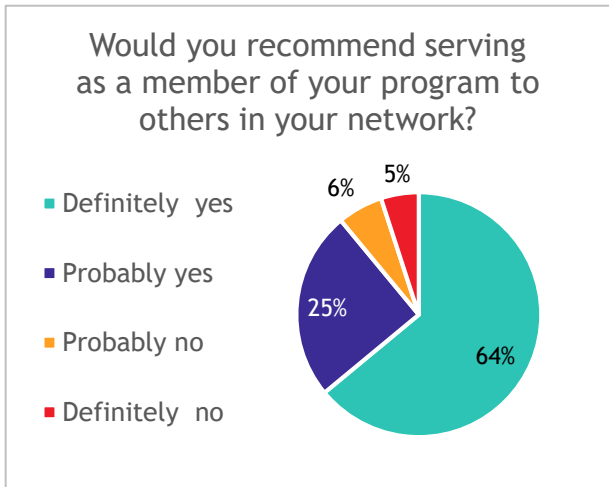
A common practice in surveys is to ask the respondent if they would recommend the program to others, as one's willingness or unwillingness to

recommend encompasses the overall experience of serving with MEC Reading Corps. Figure 12 shows that 89% of tutors would recommend serving as a member of Reading Corps, with the majority of these respondents indicating they strongly agree. These results suggest tutors had a positive experience while serving in Reading Corps.

The survey also asked tutors if serving in MEC Reading Corps had a positive impact on them personally. Figure 13 shows that 96% of tutors agree or strongly agree service had a positive impact on them, demonstrating the positive personal impact of serving.

Figure 12. MEC Tutor Satisfaction

Figure 13. Impact on MEC Tutors



Figures 14 and 15 disaggregate the two above questions by Tutor race. While nearly all Tutors of both groups were generally positive about recommending the program to others and service having a positive impact on them personally, Black or African American Tutors were more likely than white Tutors to say they would definitely recommend serving while White respondents were more likely to strongly agree service had a positive impact on them.

Figure 14. MEC Tutor Satisfaction by Race

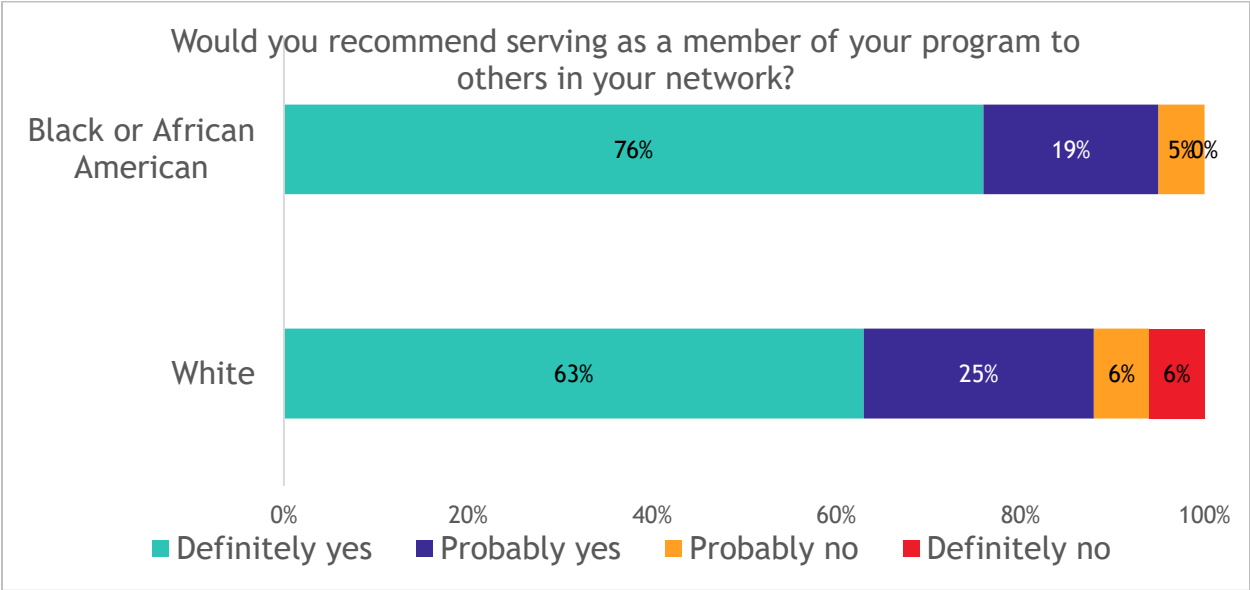
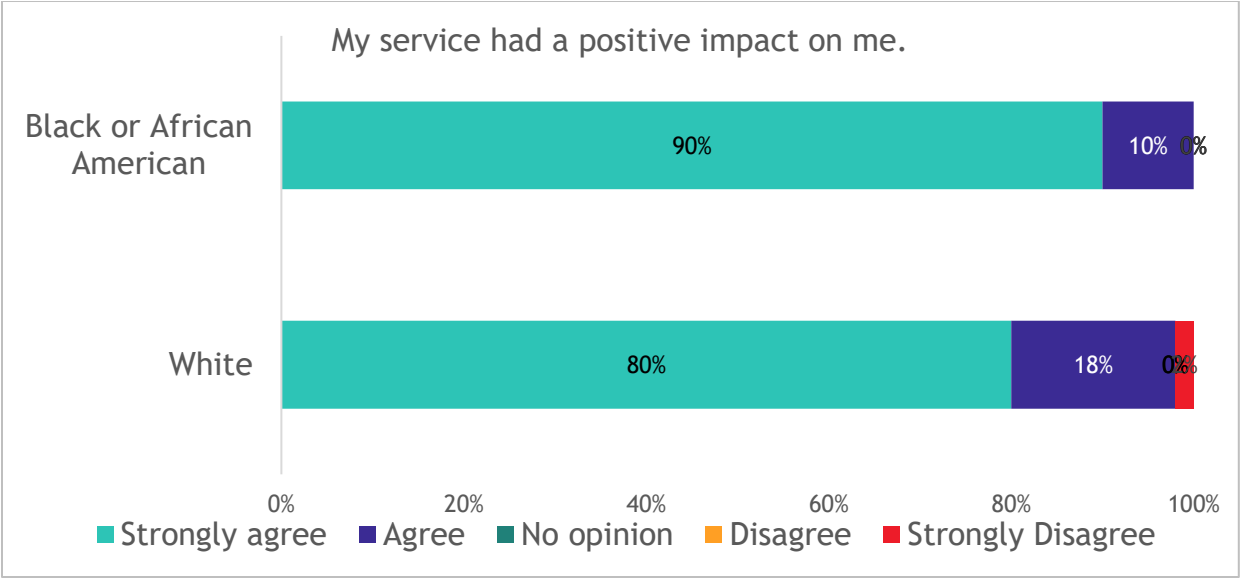


Figure 15. Impact on MEC Tutor by Race



Skill Development and Future Careers

MEC strives to support tutor professional development through the training, coaching, service experience, career coaching, and other professional development. In particular, MEC aims to increase the teacher and school staff pipeline in communities through our Tutors pursuing careers in education after their service. To evaluate these outcomes in the short term, the spring survey asks tutors to respond to questions related to their increased knowledge and skills as well as any potential plans to pursue a career in education.

Figure 16 shows that 98% of respondents agree or strongly agree that their service increased their knowledge and skills related to education, demonstrating the program is having a positive impact on tutors in this area. Figure 17 displays tutor responses related to the likelihood they will pursue a career in education as a result of their service in MEC Reading Corps. Of respondents, 58% answered that they are very likely or likely to pursue a career in education as a result of their service. These results indicate MEC Reading Corps likely makes a noteworthy contribution to the education career pipeline in the communities where tutors serve.

Figure 16. MEC Tutor Increased Knowledge and Skills

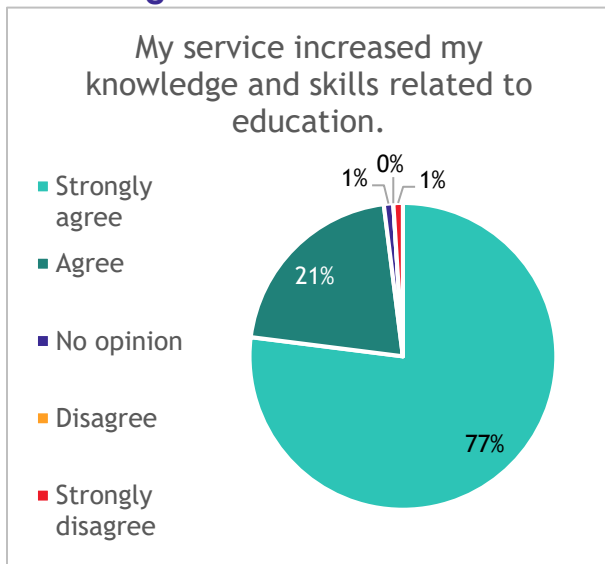
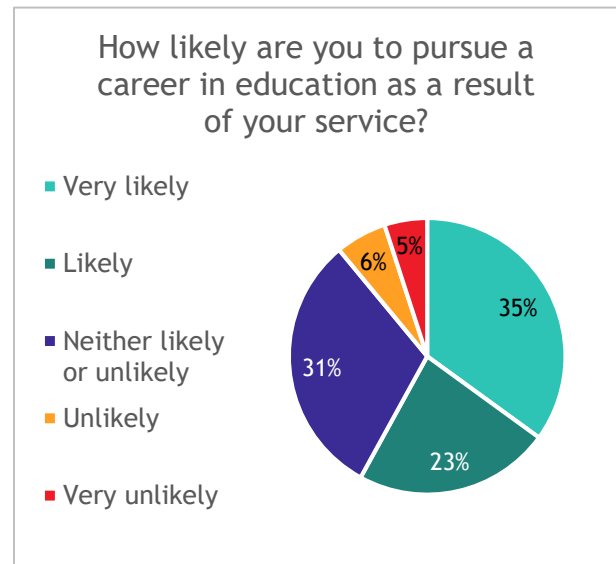


Figure 17. MEC Tutors Pursuing Careers in Education



Figures 18 and 19 disaggregate the two above questions by Tutor race. Nearly all tutors of both groups agreed or strongly agreed their service increased their knowledge and skills related to education. Black or African American

Tutors were more likely than white Tutors to indicate they are very likely to pursue a career in education as a result of their service, indicating the program may be impacting the diversity of the educator pipeline where Tutors serve.

Figure 18. MEC Tutor Increased Knowledge and Skills by Race

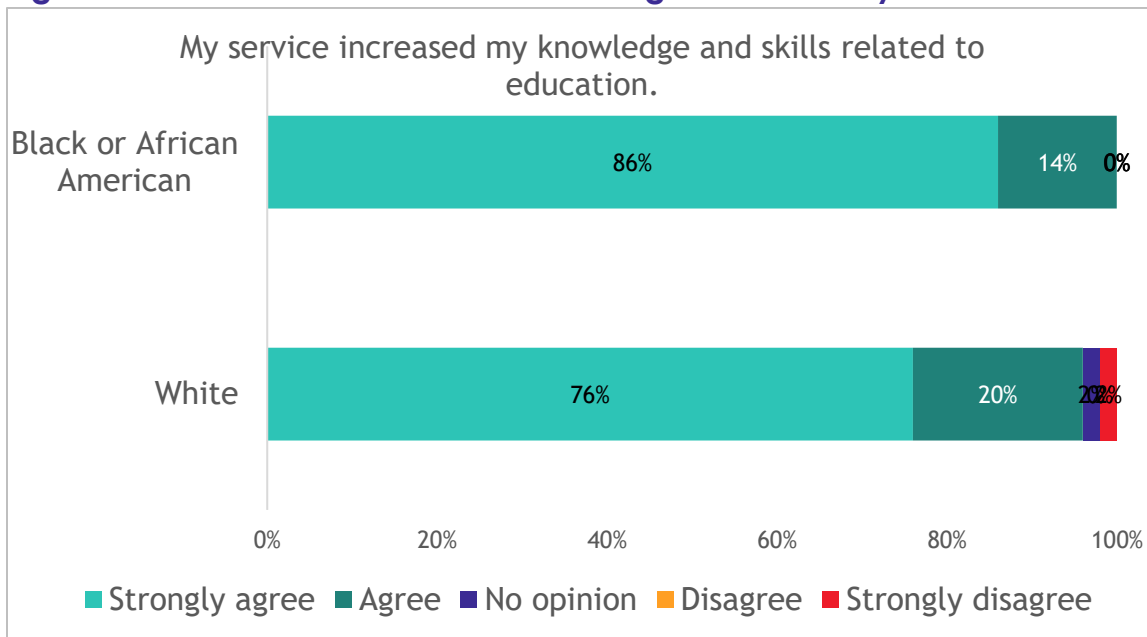
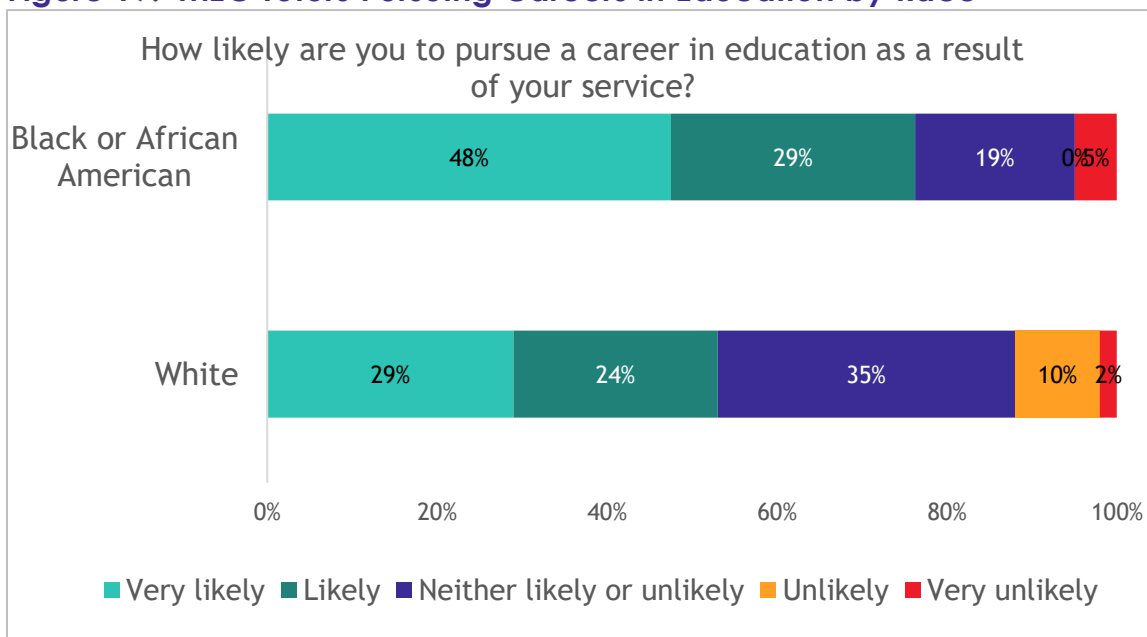


Figure 19. MEC Tutors Pursuing Careers in Education by Race



5. MEC will work with participating schools to include aggregate program data in the school improvement planning process and applicable data sets.

This was evaluated through an end-of-year survey asking this question specifically of Administrators: *Is Reading Corps MEC in your MICIP plan for 2023-2024?* Respondents answer on a Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree or Strongly Disagree. Of those Administrators who responded, 46% indicated that MEC Reading Corps was in their MICIP plan, 8% did not know, 41% indicated MEC Reading Corps was not in their MICIP plan, and 5% indicate not applicable. This is disappointingly low in terms of those indicating MEC is in the MICIP as MEC staff has continually emphasized the importance of inclusion of MEC Reading Corps in the MICIP plan. MEC will continue to revise, and re-visit guidance with participating schools to support MEC Reading Corps documentation in partner schools' MICIP plans and processes to ensure MEC is intentionally alignment with a districts and schools MTSS framework.

6. MEC will work with participating schools to include MEC program data in the school's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) implementation and monitoring data sets; and, MEC program staff will work with school districts, intermediate school districts, and MDE staff to refine the role of the MEC program within overall MTSS processes.

To respond to these, MEC used survey results and the number of opportunities MEC staff had meetings or discussions with stakeholders specific to the role of MEC within overall MTSS processes.

Survey Results

The most direct assessment of this outcome is through the annual survey sent electronically to all school Principals/Administrators, Internal Coaches, and Classroom Teachers who have students who participated in MEC Reading Corps. The survey includes specific statements asking the degree to which these stakeholders agree MEC Reading Corps is an integral part of the school's MTSS. Responses are on a Likert scale of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, No Opinion, Agree or Strongly Agree.

Question 1: My site uses MEC Reading Corps data to inform and monitor our multi-tier system of supports (MTSS) implementation for literacy.

Of Administrators who responded, 90% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 85% indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 5% indicated no opinion. Of Internal Coaches who responded, 84% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 9% indicated no opinion, and 7% indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed. Of Teachers who responded, 82% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 11% indicated no opinion, and 7% indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Question 2: MEC Reading Corps is integrated into our MTSS at my site.

Of Administrators, who responded, 84% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 11% disagreed, and 5% indicated no opinion. Of Internal Coaches who responded, 87% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 9% disagreed, and 4% indicated no opinion. Of Teachers who responded, 84% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, 9% disagreed, and 7% indicated no opinion.

A strength is up to 90% of Administrators, Internal Coaches, and Teachers report using MEC Reading Corps data for making decisions within their MTSS literacy frameworks, and MEC Reading Corps is integrated into the overall MTSS framework at the sites. We are always concerned when any percentage replies as disagreeing or having no opinion. This may be due to a lack of common language or shared understanding for implementing MTSS, i.e., do our sites have the same understanding and definitions of MTSS as with which MEC Reading Corps operates? Further, are all staff involved in MEC Reading Corps also involved in MTSS at their sites? One would assume yes; but, it is possible for "siloes" to develop – even unintentionally - and there is not collaboration and communication across stakeholders. MEC staff will continue working with partner sites to ensure there is clear, shared understanding on what a comprehensive definition of MTSS implementation fully entails in which data use is a necessary, but not sufficient for full MTSS implementation. Successful student outcomes in MEC Reading Corps as a tier 2 intervention is integral to how well a school's MTSS framework and resource allocation supports all students (tier 1) and students who need intensive supports (tier 3).

Coaching Sessions & Other Touchpoints

There are numerous touchpoints with multiple stakeholders throughout the program year. The individuals involved vary based on the purpose for the meeting; however, the majority of conversations center on student outcomes, Reading Corps fidelity, and integrating Reading Corps into the MTSS framework. For example, Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches meet with MEC Interventionists monthly to review each progress-monitoring graph for students receiving intervention. They identify strengths and

concerns, analyze the reasons for success or lack thereof, develop a plan (may include maintaining the intervention, making an intervention change, or adding an additional intervention), discuss fidelity data, and determine a timeline for next steps. This process is referred to as problem solving. Further, coaches discuss the impact of core reading instruction on all students and how students are selected as needing MEC Reading Corps tier 2 support. Coaches also discuss factors impacting MEC Reading Corps student progress such as attendance and behavior, which may require different, additional intervention.

MEC program staff provide summary progress reports with in-person meetings specifically targeted to school Principals/Administrators to engage them in program effectiveness within their MTSS literacy frameworks in the fall and winter. The reports include program outcomes including Internal Coach involvement, and a SMART goal set in the fall by Coaching Specialists and Internal Coaches for on-going strengthening of program implementation. Most goals focus on increasing fidelity checks and dosage.

All MEC staff have regularly scheduled, in-person visits to schools occurring multiple times throughout the school year. As a result, there is usually an MEC staff person at the school site at least 1-2 times per month in addition to the MEC Coaching Specialist. Depending on the purpose of the visit, staff connect with the Administrator, the Internal Coach, and Tutors. They often observe tutoring.

All tutors are required to have a mid-year evaluation conducted by an AmeriCorps Program Director or Program Coordinator. This person not only collects detailed survey information from Internal Coaches and Tutors, but also has a lengthy in-person site visit to review the information and discuss any concerns. Tutors also participate in in-person “huddles” with peers and MEC program staff 2-3 times per year.

MEC staff are frequently asked to present to administrative teams, ISDs, School Boards, etc. who are not current partners, but are interested in implementing MEC programs. It is emphasized that MEC Reading Corps is a tier 2 supplement intervention most effective for students whose reading skills in phonemic awareness, phonics, and/or fluency are just below grade level. MEC Reading Corps programming meets the definition of an evidence-based intervention.⁶ By starting the conversation of partnership with schools early and emphasizing what MEC Reading Corps does and does not do (e.g., doesn't supplant core instruction, is not intensive, tier 3 intervention), we significantly increase the likelihood of fidelity and effective integration of MEC Reading Corps into MTSS literacy frameworks.

8. MEC will provide a statement of work, which includes a timeline of the project, and budget summary, and a budget detail

⁶ E.g., www.proventutoring.org. Contact Holly Windram for specific research studies demonstrating both efficacy and effectiveness of MEC Reading Corps for diverse populations of learners in diverse settings: hwindram@hopenetwork.org

for progress monitoring and continuous improvement of program implementation.

This information was provided to Kellie Flaminio, Department Analyst/Early Literacy Grant Coordinator, Office of Educational Supports, on September 8, 2023.

MEC will provide trainings for newly identified schools as the programs expand.

Please see Appendix D for MEC Reading Corps Training dates and an example agenda.

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Appendix A: Assessment Measures and Procedures

The following table depicts which measures are used at each grade across the school year. **BOLDED** measures are used to progress monitor (Grade 1 students are monitored for progress with two measures during part of the winter).

Assessment Measures by Grade and Benchmark Season

Grade	Fall	Winter	Spring
Kindergarten	Test of Letter Sounds	Test of Letter Sounds Test of Nonsense Words (English)	Test of Letter Sounds Test of Nonsense Words (English)
Grade 1	Test of Letter Sounds Test of Nonsense Words (English)	Test of Nonsense Words (English) CBMReading (3 passages)	CBMReading (3 passages)
Grade 2	CBMReading (3 passages)	CBMReading (3 passages)	CBMReading (3 passages)
Grade 3	CBMReading (3 passages)	CBMReading (3 passages)	CBMReading (3 passages)

For each eligibility assessment, a target score was identified as the goal for the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. The original Reading Corps target scores using AIMSweb brand passages were based on research conducted at the St. Croix River Education District in Minnesota, which documented the predictive and concurrent validity of these measures with the state reading proficiency assessment. Given the strong correlations between performance on the selected AIMSweb fluency measures and the statewide reading assessment a series of cut scores were originally identified. These original benchmark scores, or target scores, defined levels of performance on the fluency measures that strongly predict future success on the grade 3 statewide reading assessment.

In the 2013-2014 school year, Reading Corps starting using FAST brand passages. With increased performance expectations for 3rd grade students on state accountability tests across the country, the target scores were updated in 2014-2015 to reflect performance that predicts proficient state test performance.

The table below specifies assessments given at each grade level and the FAST benchmark scores for each assessment during several points throughout the school year that maintain their predictive nature with reading proficiency targets that correspond to college readiness.

Benchmark Targets by Grade and Season

Grade	Measure	Fall Aug. 15-Sept. 30	Winter Jan. 2-Feb. 3	Spring Apr. 24-May 26
Kindergarten	Test of Letter Sounds	8	27	48
Grade 1	Test of Nonsense Words (English)	12	21	
Grade 1	CBMReading		52	82
Grade 2	CBMReading	63	97	116
Grade 3	CBMReading	100	122	135

The target scores for each assessment grow across years from Kindergarten to Grade 3, which results in benchmarks for reading performance that students should maintain in order to predict future reading success. Within a single year, these benchmarks are used to establish the rates of growth at which a student should grow to maintain that likelihood of success. For example, the fall Grade 2 target score is 63 on CBM-Reading. The spring Grade 2 target score on this measure is 116. To grow from 63 to 116 in one academic year, a student would need to gain 1.61 words correct per minute per week on the CBM-Reading assessment. Thus, 1.61 words growth per week becomes the expectation for Grade 2 growth rates.

Appendix B: Assessment Research Base

Assessment tools were selected for use in Reading Corps because of their well-established statistical reliability and validity for screening and progress monitoring purposes. The Test of Letter Sounds, Test of Nonsense Words, and Curriculum-based Measures for Reading (CBMReading) are measures of early literacy skills that have been supported by decades of thorough research, most recently as part of the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST). Reading Corps uses measures from FAST, which are some of the strongest available measures for assessing the skills targeted by Reading Corps. CBMReading provides an assessment of connected text reading. Early and ongoing research on this measure has also been conducted at the University of Minnesota. All these measures fit under the umbrella of “Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) and are fluency-based assessments, meaning that students respond to an unlimited number of items within a fixed amount of time and the number of correct responses is counted.

The information that follows summarizes empirical findings related to the statistical reliability and validity of the measures used in Reading Corps.

Test of Letter Sounds:

- $r = .83$ 2-week test-retest reliability
- $r = .80$ alternate form reliability
- $r = .79$ with Letter Naming Fluency
- Predictive $r = .72$ with R-CBM

Sources:

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Test of Nonsense Words:

- $r = .83$ one month alternate form reliability
- $r = .36$ to $.59$ with WJ-R Readiness Cluster
- Predictive $r = .82$ with Spring R-CBM in Spring of grade 1
- Predictive $r = .65$ with oral reading and $.54$ with maze in grade 3
- ELL Predictive $r = .63$ with a composite of DIBELS NWF and R-CBM

Sources:

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Curriculum Based Measurement – Reading (CBMReading):

- $r = .92$ to $.97$ test retest reliability
- $r = .89$ to $.94$ alternate form reliability
- $r = .82$ to $.86$ with Gates-MacGinite Reading Test
- $r = .83$ to Iowa Test of Basic Skills
- $r = .88$ to Stanford Achievement Test
- $r = .73$ to $.80$ to Colorado Student Assessment Program
- $r = .67$ to Michigan Student Assessment Program
- $r = .73$ to North Carolina Student Assessment Program
- $r = .74$ to Arizona Student Assessment Program
- $r = .61$ to $.65$ to Ohio Proficiency Test, Reading Portion
- $r = .58$ to $.82$ with Oregon Student Assessment Program (SAT 10)

Sources:

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Appendix C: Intervention Research Base

The interventions used in the Reading Corps program are designed to provide additional practice that is supplemental to the core reading instructional program offered by the local school site. The interventions target automaticity and fluency of important reading skills that have been introduced by local classroom teachers. It is important to note that *Reading Corps participation is in addition to, not in replacement of,* a comprehensive core reading instructional program, and that the Reading Corps program should in no way be viewed as a substitute for high quality core instruction.

A unique feature of Reading Corps is the consistent use of research-based intervention protocols with participating students to provide this additional support. School-based Internal Coaches select from a menu of research-based supplemental reading interventions for use with participating students as listed below. For each intervention protocol sources of empirical evidence for intervention effectiveness are listed.

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Appendix D: MEC Reading Corps 2023-2024 Empower Hour Schedule for Internal Coaches and Program Training Dates



Empower Hour Monthly Call Calendar

Date	Time	Topic(s)*
August 16th and 30th	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	MEC Kick-off Training and program year expectations
September 20, 2023	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Assessment data, intervention selection, teacher buy-in
October 18, 2023	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Member support and monthly observations
November 14, 2023** MEMBERS JOIN CALL	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Looking at data and student growth; barriers
December 2023	NO MEETING	NO MEETING
January 17, 2024	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Looking at fidelity and fit
February 21, 2024	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Program Alignment
March 20, 2024	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM (only option)	Remaining Diligent
April 2024	NO MEETING	NO MEETING
May 15, 2024 MEMBERS JOIN CALL	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	EOY Wrap-Up

*Topics subject to change

**November call will occur on Tuesday, November 14 due to many schools closed on Wednesday, November 15

Dates		Reading Corps Training	
		Cohort 1	
8/14/23	AC Training/SKO/LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
8/15/23	Zoom/LMS Modules/in-person social gathering	Zoom/LMS/Radisson Hotel Lansing	
8/16/23	In-person practice day	Radisson Hotel Lansing	
8/17/23	Zoom/ LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
8/18/23	Zoom/ LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
8/21/23	Zoom/LMS/Corps Day	Zoom / LMS	
8/22/23	Members report to school	School Site	
		Cohort 2	
8/28/23	AC Training/SKO/LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
8/29/23	Zoom/LMS Modules/in-person social gathering	Zoom/LMS/Radisson Hotel Lansing	
8/30/23	In-person practice day	Radisson Hotel Lansing	
8/31/23	Zoom/ LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
9/1/23	Zoom/ LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
9/5/23	Zoom/LMS/Corps Day	Zoom / LMS	
9/6/23	Members report to school	School Site	
		Cohort 3	
10/23/23	AC Training/SKO/LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
10/24/23	Zoom/LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
10/25/23	In-person practice day	Radisson Hotel Lansing	
10/26/23	Zoom/ LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
10/27/23	Zoom/LMS/Corps Day	Zoom/LMS	
10/30/23	Members report to school	School Site	
		Cohort 4	
1/15/24	AC Training/SKO/LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
1/16/24	Zoom/LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
1/17/24	Zoom/LMS Modules	Zoom/LMS	
1/18/24	Virtual Practice Day	Zoom	
1/19/24	Zoom/LMS/Corps Day	Zoom/LMS	
1/22/24	Members report to school	School Site	